

Application No.: 10/723,531
Amendment Dated February 18, 2005
Reply to Office Action of December 14, 2004

REMARKS

By this amendment applicants have amended claim 24, and canceled claims 25-26. Thus, upon entry of this amendment, claims 24 and 27-33 shall be in the present application.

In the Office Action, the Examiner has rejected claims 24, 25, 27 and 31 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,412,623 to Schmidt. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,042,850 to Iida, et al. In view of the amendment to claim 24, the cancellation of claims 25-26, and the Examiner's indication of the allowability of claims 26, 28-30, 32, and 33, applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner's rejection of claims 24, 25, 27 and 31 is no longer tenable, and respectfully request withdrawal of that rejection.

Finally, in the Office Action, the Examiner has objected to claims 26, 28-30, 32, and 33 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. The Examiner has stated that those claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. By this amendment, applicants have amended claim 24 to incorporate the limitations recited by claims 25 and 26. Thus, applicants respectfully submit that claim 24, and all claims that depend therefrom, are now in condition for allowance.

In view of the amendments and cancellation of claims set forth herein, applicants respectfully submit that all claims pending in the present application, i.e., claims 24 and 27-33, are now in condition for allowance.

Applicant hereby authorizes the Commissioner to charge the fees necessary in connection with this amendment, including the fees necessary in connection with the Petition, and any other fees necessary in connection with this application, to Deposit Account Number 02-1666.

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Any questions concerning this application or amendment may be directed to the undersigned agent of applicant.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: February 18, 2005

By:

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